## SERMON

PREACHED before the

# KING,

UPON

The Seventh of March, 166:

BY

FOHN Lord Bishop of CHESTER.

B. F. Wilking O

John Wilkins, 4 of chester

Publiched

25y his Majesties special Command.

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must contribute to a Compleat state of Happi els in this World, namely,

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man, or Ouce, with her Armes extends ed, in the Pate of of Sive RA and He.

Length of dayes is in her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and HONOR.

Her wayes are wayes of Pleasantness, and all her Pathes are Peace.

He chief Design of the Wise 230 man in this Text, is to see forth the many great Advantages that belong to Religion; In order to which, he doth here Enumerate those sive Principal things, that

must contribute to a Compleat state of Happiness in this World, namely, Health, and Riches, and Honor, and Pleasure, and Peace; And asserts concerning them, that they are the proper effects of that wildome which consists

in being Religious.

This he expresses by way of Allegory, representing Wildom (as is usual for other Virtues) in the shape of a Woman, or Queen, with her Armes extended, in the Posture of Directing and Rewarding her Followers; Holding in her right hand the Blessing of Health, or length of Dayes, the great Promise of the Law, to which the Precedence of the right hand is therefore given, because it is amongst all Worldly Blessings, the greatest and most desirable; That, without which a Man cannot enjoy any thing elle, nor so much as his own self: Length of dayes is in ber right hand. And then,

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for those other things, which the Generality of Men do so much covet and labour after, Wealth, and Reputation; these likewise are at her Disposal, and must proceed from her Gift; And in her left hand Riches and Honor. And, as for the Cheerfulne/s of our Conditions, he affirms, that the truest Pleasure must be found in those wayes that are directed by Her; Her wayes are wayes of Pleasantness. And because there are several things, which have some present delight in them, seeming to drop as the Hony- Prov.5. 4. Combe, and to be smoother then Oyle; And yet upon tryal, do prove in the issue, bitter as Wormwood, and sharpe as a twoedged Sword; therefore tis added, that her wayes are not only pleasant, but they are likewise Safe and Quiet: All her Paths are Peace.

That these things are the effects of Religion, is here only affirmed, which, to

them who believe the Authority of Scripture, is evidence sufficient: But, it were easie to prove this, concerning each of them, by all other kinds of evidence, of which such matters are capable.

I purpose at this time to Treat only concerning the Third of them, namely Honor; as being the most proper Subject for this Presence and Auditory. And that this can only be attain'd by Keligion and Vistue, I doubt not but to prove, with so much strength and perspicuity as shall be sufficient to convince any one, who will but attend and consider.

In order to this, I shall first endeavour to state the true Nature of Honor, and to shew wherein the most proper notion of it doth consist; 'Tis an equivocal word, and is capable of various sences.

First, Sometimes 'tis used to denote worthy and creditable Parentage; the being derived from such Ancestors as have

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been famous in their Generation for some eminent Virtue or Exploit: Wherein there is this benefit; that a Man hath great Examples in his own Family, and so much the stronger Obligation not to degenerate from them: But it shews rather what such a Man should be, then what he is; and, to a Person that is not Virtuous, doth prove a Prejudice rather then an advantage.

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Secondly, Sometimes 'tis used to fignifie, Titles of Place and Dignity, according to the various orders and degrees of Nobility in several Nations: But, this kind of Honor depending meerly upon the Princes Favour, must therefore be wholly extrinsical, and confequently can have no more due to it, then a meer External respect. Such persons may challenge from us, that we should give them their due Titles, and demeane our selves towards them with that Ob.

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Guality: But then, as to inward esteem and affection, they can demand no greater a share of this, then according as their real worth and virtue shall require. The Royal Stampe upon any kind of Mettal, may be sufficient to give it an Extrinsick value, and to determine the Rate at which it is to pass amongst Coynes, but it cannot give an Intrinsick value, or make that which is but Brass to be Gold.

Tis true indeed, there are some Callings and Relations of Men, to whom an Inward Veneration is due, though the Persons themselves should not be Virtuous; Namely, Magistrates, and Ministers, and Parents, and Benefactors; who, having somewhat of a Divine Stampe and Impress upon them, may therefore challenge from us, that we should demeane our selves towards them,

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both with such an Outward Respect, as may become their Places, and with fuch an Inward Respect too, às may be sutable to that Image which they bear, our dependance upon them, and Obligation to them. But then, we cannot be Obliged to think such Persons Good Men, unless we have some Evidence to believe them to be so, or at least, not to be otherwise; So that they are beholding to something extrinsical to their Persons, namely, to their Callings and Relations, for that Honor which is paid to them.

Thirdly, The word Honor is sometimes used for that Esteem and Reputation which a Man hath in the World, especially amongst Vertuous Persons; according to which sence 'tis defin'd by Tully to be Consentiens Laus bonorum, the Tuscul. Concurrent Approbation of Good Men; Q. 2. when those, who are best able to Judge of real worth, shall both think and speak

well of others, this is properly Honoring of them. And in this sence (which is the most proper notion of the words) it is one of the greatest blessings that this World can afford; much to be preferrred before Riches, or Pleasures, or Life it self. A good Name is rather to be chosen than great Riches, and loving kindness, rather than Silver or Gold, Prov. 22.1. One that is a Generous, Virtuous Man, will choose to dye, rather than do any thing, that may expose him to Infamy: St. 1 Cor. 9. Paul was of this Mind; It were better for me to dye, than that any should make my Glorying void. There have been some Wife Men, who have neglected and rerefused that other kind of Honor, consisting in Titles of Dignity, as conceiving more of Burden and Temptation in it, than of real Advantage; But, no Man, in his Wits, did ever despise a good Name, unless such profligate dissolute Wretches

Wretches, as did either despair of, or resolve against, doing any thing, that might deserveit. 'Tis not easie to reckon up the many Advantages that belong to this kind of Honor: 'Tis Power, inabling a Man to do things great and worthy, to be useful to his Friends and his Country: 'Tis Safety, and doth give a Man such an interest in the esteem and affection of others, as will make them concern'd for his Welfare, ready to stand by him and assist him in any kind of Danger; which are so great Advantages, that who foever shall wilfully neglect them, must needs be render'd very contemptible.

Having thus Explained the proper Notion of Honor, I proceed in the next place to Prove, that Religion and Virtue is the only meanes for the attaining of it: This I shall endeavour to do by Testimony, and by Reason, and by Experience,

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which are all the kinds of Arguments,

that such matters are capable of.

First, By Testimony. The Scripture doth abound in divers Affertions and Promises to this purpose: Such as are Religious, are stiled the Excellent of the Earth, Psal. 16. 3. and said to be more excellent than their Neighbours, Prov. 17.27. They are Gods peculiar Treasure. The dearly beloved of his Soul. He sets 9. Exod. 19. apart the Man that is Godly for himself. Though such persons may be but 7. Pfal. 4.3. low, as to their outward Condition; being put to mander up and down in Sheepskins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflitted, tormented, seeking for refuge, in De-Sarts and Mountains, in Dens, and Caves of the Earth; yet may they, upon the account of Religion, be of such an excellent value, that in the Judgement of the Holy Ghost, The whole World is not worthy of them, Heb, 11. 37,38.

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The Wise-man speaking of Religion, saith, that it shall be an ornament of Grace to thy head, and as a chain about thy neck, Exalt her, and she shall promote thee, and Chap.4.8. bring thee to honor, She shall give to thy bead an ornament of grace, and a Crown of glory. God hath engaged himself by Promife to those that are Religious, that he will set them above other Nations; they shall be made the Head, and not the Tayle, Deut. 28. 13.0 He hath said, Those 70hn. 12. that honor me, I will honor, I Sam. 2. 30. And certainly, he, who is the King of Kings, must needs be the Fountain of Honor, and able to dispose of it as he and amit en hears for their Krozslasiq

But, because such persons, as are no friends to Religion, may have but a small esteem for the Authority of Scripture; Therefore to these I would suggest the concurrent Opinion of Wise Men in all former Ages. Though the antient Phi-

losophers:

los ophers were divided into various Sects, and differ'd very much from one another in several Opinions; yet, in this, they have all agreed, that Honor is due only to Virtue, and doth not properly belong to any thing else. It would be tedious to enumerate the several sayings to this purpose, out of Plato, Aristotle, Tully, Seneca, and the other Antients: And certainly, that Man must needs have a very extravagant conceit of his own Abilities, who dares prefer his private Opinion, before the General Consent of Wise Men in former Ages, such as have been counted the greatest Masters of Reason, and most eminent for their Knowledge and their Wildome.

Secondly, I proceed in the next place to confirme this by the Principles of Reason, That Religion and Virtue is the cause of Honor. There may be a two-fold

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fold cause of things?

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That is said to be the Moral cause. which doth dispose a Man to such a Condition, upon the Account of Fitness and Defert, and in this sence Honor is the Reward of Virtue; There is an equitable right, a futableness and congruity, that good Men should be loved and esteemed, and vitious Men exposed to Shame: As Snow in Summer, and as Rain: in Harvest, so is Honor unsutable for a Fool, Prov. 26. 1. The intermixing of Winter and Summer, would not cause a greater disorder in the Natural World, than the cross disposal of Honor and contempt, would in the Morah World. And hence is it; that the Lawes of all Nations and Governments, have owned it as a point of Policy, to excite their Subjects.

jects unto Virtuous and worthy Actions, by this Motive of Honor, and to deterr them from Vitious Courses, by the consideration of the shame and contempt

which belongs to them.

That is said to be the Natural cause of a thing, which doth by its own immediate efficacy produce the effect; and in this sence likewise is Virtue the cause of Honor. The Fire doth not more naturally produce heat, than Goodness doth Love and Esteem; Which will appear very plain, if we consider, That Inward Honouring is nothing elfe, but the Believing a Man to be Worthy and Virtuous; and the Testifying this by our Words and Actions is Outward Honouring. Now, nothing can be more evident, then that the best means for one to bethought good, is to be formed bak

y A Manmay excell in Strength, Beauty, Riches, Learning, Wit, which are

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all commendable things, and will contribute to a Mans esteem; But, if we apprehend such a one to be notoriously Vitious, This esteem will not be accompanied with Love, but with Fear, Hate, and Envy; because such a one hath by these things so much the greater advantage of doing Mischief in the World: Whereas on the other side, though a Man should be destitute of all these other advantages, without any Nobility in his Ancestors, but of a small Estate, a low Condition; yet, if we believe him to be a truly-Virtuous Man, it cannot be, but that we must pay a Veneration to him.

All things whatsoever have some Natural Standard, whereby the Goodness of them is to be Measured; namely, their sutableness unto that chief end, for which they are designed. We do not therefore account a Ship to be good, be, cause 'tis curiously painted and gilded.

or carved and inlayed, but because 'tis fitted for all the purpoles of Navigation, which is, the proper end and use of a Ship: Nor do we therefore account a Sword to be good, because it hath a rich Hilt, and an Embroidered Scabbard, but because it is fit for the proper use of a Sword, which is to cut: They are the compasen. Ep. 76. risons of Seneca, speaking of this Subject: In homine quoque, nihil ad rem pertinet, quantum aret, quantum fæneret, a quam multis salutetur, &c. sed quam bonus fit. It should be so likewise in our esteem of Men, who are not so much to be valued by the Grandeur of their Estates or Titles, as by their inward goodness.

> Every Man is endowed with a Natural principle, inclining him to a state of Happinels, and hath in some measure, both an Ability to judge of, and a freedome and liberty for applying himself unto, those Duties, which are the proper

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meanes for the promoting of this end: And this being the peculiar difference of the Humane Nature, therefore a man is not upon any other account to be justly praised or blamed, but according to the right or wrong use of this natural liberty; And consequently as a Man doth find, either in himself or others, a constant and firm resolution, to make a right use of this, so should he proportion his esteem accordingly; Preferring this Inward Greatness, this Rectitude of Mind, whereby a Man is resolved in every condition to do that which shall appear to be his Duty, before any External Greatness whatsoever.

There are two kind of Virtues amongst all the rest, which are by General consent esteemed Venerable, and fuch as do advance the Reputation of those who are endowed with them; ed D 2 Lices Ulacare

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namely Courage.

Because they have a more intrinsick rise, and do less depend upon External advantages, but seem rather to be rooted in the Inward Frame and Temper of Mind; and withal, are most beneficial both to our Selves and Others: The former signifying a Man to have those Intellectual Abilities, which are proper to his kind, whereby the Humane Nature is to be distinguished from other things: The other, because it argues a Rectitude in the Will, and a Power to subdue the Passion of Fear, which is most natural to our present state of Infirmity; and withal doth support a Man against Difficulties, and inable for those two Services, of Doing and Suffering as he ought. And, for this Reason, the Vices that are

opposite to these, are amongst all others counted the most shameful; There being no greater Reproach to be cast upon any one, then to be esteemed a Fool, or a Coward.

Now a Man that is Irreligious cannot justly pretend to either of these Virtues.

1. For Wisdome. This is so essential to Religion, that in the Scripture-phrase (especially in the Writings of David and Solomon) they both go under the same Name, and there is very good reason why it should be so; because there is fuch an intimate agreement between the Natures of them: The Philosopher doth define Wisdome to consist in an ability and inclination, to make choice of the right Meanes in the prosecution of our true End. And nothing can inable a Man for this but Religion, both as to the Subordinate End of Temporal Happinels

piness in this World; but chiefly with respect to that great and Supreme End of Eternal Happiness in the World to come.

2. And then for Courage, 'Tis not possible for a Man to be truly Valiant, unless he be withall truly Religious: He may be bold and daring, and able (in a fearless manner) to rush upon any danger, but then he must stifle his Reason from considering what the Consequences of things may be, what shall become of him hereafter, if he should miscarry. There being no man whatsoever so totally free from the Apprehensions of a future state, but that when he is serious and confiderate, he must be startled with Doubts and Feares concerning it: So that there cannot be any rational, sedate, deliberate courage, but only in fuch, as have some good hopes of a better Estate in the other World:

World; And, 'tis Religion only that can inable a Man for this.

3. I proceed to the Third kind of Argument to this purpose, from Experience; By which, I mean that Practical Knowledge, which every man may attain by his own Observation of the usual course of things in the World: And, by this, it will appear, that no kind of persons have been more highly Reverenced in the Hearts and Consciences of others, then those that have been most eminent for their Virtue and Religion; which hath been alwayes true, both with respect to Publick Communities, and Private Persons.

First, For Nations; If we consult the Stories of former times, we shall find that saying of Solomon constantly verified, That Righteousness doth exalt a Prov. 14.

Nation, but Sin doth prove a reproach 34.

to it: And more especially the sin of Irreligion.

religion and Prophaness; As this doth increase in any Nation, so must the Honor and Reputation of that Nation decrease. The Roman Empire was then at the highest, as to its Name and Greatness, when it was so as to its Virtue; when they were most punctual in observing the Rites of their Religion, (though that were a false way of Worship,) most Heroical in their Justice, Courage, Fidelity, Gratitude; then it was that they deserv'd to Govern the World, and to be had in greatest Honor above all other Nations: And not only Tully and Polybius, two Heathen Writers, who, upon that Account, might be thought more partial; But St. Austin also and Lactantius, two of the Fathers, do ascribe the flourishing of that Empire, when it was at its height, to the Religion, and Piety, and Vertue of those times; And, as they did afterward degenerate from this,

fo did they decline likewise in their Greatness and Honor.

Thus also hath it been with particular persons; Amongst the Heathen, What Elogies do we find in the Honor of Socrates, Aristides, Gato, Epidetus! The latter of which, though but a poor Slave, had yet such a Veneration paid to his Memory, that his Earthen Lampe by which he was wont to Study, was, after his Death, sold for 3000 Drachms.

Nor was it otherwise amongst the Christians; The Apostles were but poor Fishermen, Histerate Mechanicks; Many of the Martyrs were but of mean condition, much Opposed and Persecuted in the World; And yet these Men, during the time of their lives, were highly Revenued amongst those that knew them; and since their Deaths, what can be more Glorious then that Renown which

they have amongst Men, when the greatest Kings and Princes will not mention their Names without Reverence; when whole Nations are willing to set apart, and to observe Solemne Dayes and Festivals in Honor of their Memories.

And, as it hath alwayes been thus formerly, so I appeale to every mans breast, whether it be not so now; Let them but examin, what their Inclinations are towards such Persons, whom they believe to be truly Virtuous: Not only to such amongst them as are their particular Acquaintance and Friends, but likewise to Strangers, nay to very Enemies; whether they do not esteem, and love them, and will well to them.

I shall crave leave to speak briefly to two Objections, that may be made, against what I have been Proving.

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I. The Scripture saith (speaking of good Men; That the World shall revile and persecute them, and speak all manner of evil against them: Our Saviour himself was despised and rejected of Men; And his Apostles were used as the rubbish and off-scouring of all things.

To these two things may be said by

way of Answer.

First, It cannot otherwise be expected, but that when a New Religion is to be set up, men must be highly concern'd in their opposing of it, and of those that promote it: And the fore-cited Texts do particularly relate to this very case; when Christianity was first introduced into the World, and to be propagated by the Sufferings of those that Professed it; which being an exempt case, and not according to the usual course of things, therefore these Texts are not equally aplicable to other Times and Places, when

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and where the True Religion hath obtained, and Kings prove Nursing Fathers to it.

Secondly, Those that knew our Saviour and his Followers, did highly Honor them: And, as for others that were ignorant of them, and not sufficiently convinced of their goodness, 'tis no wonder that they used them accordingly. The most vitious person that is, if he doth either know, or have reason to think another to be Virtuous, must of necessity pay to him an Inward Reverence; Because tis not in any mans power, so farr to offer violence to his own Faculties, as to believe any thing against his Evidence. 'Tis true indeed, men have a greater power over their Words and Actions, then they have over their Beliefe; and therefore they may call, and use such a one as they please, they may revile, and persecute him; And, in this sence, Honor est in bonorante: bas

honorante: But, even in so doing, they seem to pay a Veneration to Religion it self, whil'st they are fain to disguise it, under the Names of Hypocrisie, Heresie, Superstition, thereby to justifie themselves in their opposing of it.

II. It appears by the Experience of all Ages, that Vitious Men are some-

times had in Honor.

To this it may be Answer'd.

1. External Honor may be due to them.

them, by such as do not know them. The meer Opinion of being Virtuous, must of necessity have the same advantage in this respect, with Real Goodness; The main difference is, that it is not like to last, because it is almost Morally impossible, for a Man, who doth only dissemble Virtue, to stand always upon so strict a guard, as not to be discovered. If it be said, that

men, who are Notoriously Vitious, are sometimes applauded, and Cry'd-Up for their Vertue; It may be Answer'd, That this cannot be so truly stiled Honoring, as Flattering; The proper Notion of which doth consist in giving undue Commendations; Nor, will any contribute to it, but vile Sycophants, the worst kind of Enemies, and the most Incompetent Judges of real worth: Such only being sit to give true Praise, who are themselves Praise-worthy.

Now, if this be the true state of the Case I have been speaking to; That the generality of Wise and Considerate Men, in all former times, have attested to this Truth, if the Reason of the thing require that it must be so; And, if it appear accordingly from Common Experience to be so; If the most Material Objections against it, may be so plainly, and fully satisfied, then there can be no

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fufficient Reason to doubt, of the truth of this Proposition; That Religion and Vertue is the most proper meanes to promote the Interest of Honor, which is the thing I was to prove.

I shall crave leave to suggest two things by way of Application, and I have done.

First, This may convince men of Folly, who feek for Honor by any other Meanes. The great Instances which are commonly given, of Mens being Fooles, is, from their Chusing such Meanes, as are altogether infufficient for the End they Design: As the endeavouring to make a Blackamore White by walking of him, &c. But, the uling of such Meanes, as are not only insufficient for, but opposite unto, and Destructive of the End they Propose; this is a degree above Folly, and may be stiled Madness: 'Tis as if a Man should run into the Water to dry himself, and

into the Fire to coole himself; And yet this is the Case of many Men in the World, who propose to themselves such Courses, for the Promoting of their Honor, as are most Destructive of it : namely, Prophaness, and Contempt of Religion, Despising that which other Men stand in Awe of; by which they think to get the Reputation of Wit, and of Courage; Of Wit, by pretending to penetrate more deeply into the Nature of things, and to understand them better then others do; not to be so easily imposed upon, as other Credulous People are. Of Courage, by their not being so easily scared at the Apprehension of Danger at a distance.

But the Plain Truth is, such Persons do hereby prove themselves to be both Fooles and Cowards.

Fooles, In mistaking their great Interests, in making choice of such meanes, as There being no kind of Men that are more exposed (whatsoever they themselves may think of it) to Publick Infamy and Hatred, than those that seek for Credit by despising of Religion. Fools, in venturing their future Estates and their Souls, upon such hazards, as all Mankind would Cry-out-upon for the most Palpable Folly and Madness, if they should do the like, towards their Temporal Estates, or their Bodies.

Cowards, In being more afraid of little Dangers, because they are present, than of greater, because they are future, and at a distance: As that Soldier, who doth more dread the present danger of Fighting, when he is oblig'd to it, than the future danger of suffering Martial Law for runing away, may justly be esteemed

esteemed a notorious Coward; So may that Man who is more afraid of a prefent inconvenience, by incurring the prejudice and displeasure of his loose Companions, to whom he would be acceptable, than of a future Mischief from the Judgement of God.

No Man will esteem another to be truly Valiant, because he is not afraid to do fuch vile unworthy things as will expose him to the displeasure and punishment of the Civil Magistrate; Much less should he be so Accounted, for daring to do fuch things, as will in the iffue expose him to Divine Vengeance.

For Men of no real worth to expect the esteem and affection of others, as it is very unequal on their parts, requiring Brick without Straw; So neither is it Lawful nor Possible for others to allow it them: Not Lamful, because it is as well a mans duty to contemn a vile Person, as to Honor psal. 15.4. those that fear the Lord. Not Possible, because men must necessarily Judge according to the most prevailing Evidence; nor can they esteem such a one to be worthy, whom they know to be otherwise, any more than they can believe that to be White and Streight, which they see is Black and Crooked.

Secondly, If these things be so, it will hence follow, that men who have any Sence of Honor, should, by these considerations, be excited to a Love of that, which is the only Meanes to it, namely, Religion and Vertue. Those of Slavish Sordid Spirits, may be more easily perswaded by the consideration of Gaine; But, no Motive can be more powerful with Noble and Generous Mindes, than that of Honor. That man

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not make it one of his principal cares to keep his Name unspotted; It being no easie matter to recover a Forseited Re-

putation.

Such Profligate Wretches, as are without any sence of Honor or Shame, may justly be esteemed the Publick Pests and Mischiefs of Mankind, and such as ought to be Banished from amongst them, as being the Common Enemies to Government and Societies.

Of all forts of Men, there lies a peculiar Obligation upon them that are in Publick Places, to preserve their Reputations clear and without blemish: A Private Person is not so much concern'd to look after Publick Fame, as that Man is, who is ingag'd in Publick Imployment. He, that can abundantly satisfie himself, with the the Conscience of well doing, while he is in a Private Station, if once he be called to any such Imployment, where he must be Useful to others by his Authority; Tis most sitting then, that he should seek the Aid of Opinion, and Publick Esteem, because its this which Rules the World, and Stamps upon Things the Rates at

which they are to pass.

There is nothing in this World that we can Propose to our selves of greater benefit, than the Love and Esteem of Good Men; I have shewed before that it is Power, 'tis Safety: And besides all the Advantages which we have by it whilst we live, 'tis one of those things, that will abide after us, when we are gone out of this World; And, for that reason a special regard is to be had to it: And, the more Wise any Man is, the more Care will he

take to transmit a Grateful Memory of himself to future Times : And, since he must be Spoken of after his Departure, he will take Care that he be well Spoken of, that his Name may be as a Precious Ointment, leaving a Perfume behind it; That Men may Rife up at the mention of it, and call him bleffed.

Thall shut up all, with that Affectoinate Exhortation of the eloquent Apostle, Phil. 4.8. Finally Brethren, where ver things are Venerable, what foever things are Lovely, what soever things are of good Report, If there be any Vertue, if there be any Praise, think of these Things. And the Peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your Hearts and Minds through Fefus Christ. STATE.

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IMPRIMATOR

Guil. Janc. R. P. D. Hen. Epif. Lond.

Nov. the 9th 1678.

